



USAID
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PARAGUAY

GLOBAL CLIMATE CHANGE

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USAID's extensive activities in Paraguay have not only succeeded in increasing public participation in the process of environmental awareness but have also significantly helped mitigate the effects of climate change. Through USAID's support for the conservation of natural resources and management of protected areas, crucial carbon stocks have been preserved, as has important biodiversity.

Background: With a population of 6.1 million and its size equal to the state of California, Paraguay has three distinct regions that have globally significant biological diversity: the Upper Parana Atlantic Forest; the Chaco forest; and the Patanal wetlands. These regions contain more than 650 bird species, as well as many threatened and endangered species. Unfortunately, with a high deforestation rate, Paraguay's biological diversity is threatened. The Paraguayan economy is primarily dependent on agriculture exports of soybeans, cotton, grains, cattle, timber, and sugar. However, the once rich topsoil of the eastern border region has been severely eroded. Groundwater in this region is being threatened and depleted as a result of unchecked land-use.

USAID/Paraguay supports four ongoing programs that focus on economic growth, reproductive health, environmental initiatives and the strengthening of democracy. Two major themes that link these initiatives are: 1) a vibrant, pluralistic civil society as the basis for democratic governance, improved trade capacity (economic growth), improved health and provision of services and management of natural resources; and 2) government responsiveness, accountability, and accessibility to citizens strengthened through the decentralization of power and authority to local levels and measures which promote honesty and transparency throughout all levels of government. USAID is also implementing a Millennium Challenge Account Threshold Country Program for Paraguay over the next two years to fight corruption and encourage formal economic activities.

Sector Specific Climate Change Activities. *Addressing Climate Change through Improved Natural Resources and Protected Areas Management.* Over the past two years, with USAID support, international and national partner non-governmental organizations (NGOs) have been able to establish several protected areas (42,914 hectares) using two mechanisms — private nature reserves and conservation easements. Ongoing management improvement activities funded by USAID in all of the nation's national parks in Paraguay continue to address sustainable environmental management objectives. Additionally, the current management plan of Cerro Cora National Park was updated and revised. Support to conservation research has also provided important information to local decision-makers.

USAID funding also supported improvements in the management systems in Caaguazú National Park capacity, including re-opening two control posts, provision of communication equipment, refurbishment of facilities, training of park guards and vehicle maintenance. All of these measures are expected to lead to reduced incidence of illegal logging.

A national NGO, Guyra Paraguay, with support from The Nature Conservancy (TNC) and USAID raised \$250,000 in the U.S. for the purchase

USAID's partners in climate change activities in Paraguay include*:

- World Wildlife Fund (WWF)
- The Nature Conservancy (TNC)
- Guyra Paraguay
- Procosara
- IDEA
- Fundacion Desdelchaco

* Because partners change as new activities arise, this list of partners is not comprehensive.

of land in the area of the San Rafael National Park — a very rich and representative ecosystem of the Atlantic forest. USAID support consisted of technical assistance to develop a business plan, communication materials and outreach for the purchase. Procosara, also a Paraguayan environmental NGO which receives support from USAID, raised funding for management and control activities in San Rafael National Park. Finally, in 2006 the USG and the Government of Paraguay signed a debt-swap agreement under the US Tropical Forest Conservation Act. This agreement allows for Paraguay debt payments over the next 13 years to be invested in conserving tropical forests in and around San Rafael.

Capacity Building, Including Activities in Support of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC). USAID/Paraguay assisted the Secretariat of the Environment in Paraguay to prepare its National Communication¹ for the Eleventh Session of the Conference of the Parties to the UNFCCC. Additionally, USAID supported the preparation of pre-feasibility studies for the restoration of forest lands, as well as the development of economic incentives for site conservation in the Upper Parana Atlantic Forest.

For more information on Paraguay, visit
USAID's Website at:

<http://www.usaid.gov>

¹ Central to the intergovernmental process of the COP is an imperative to share, communicate and respond to information by way of national communications. These reports provide the means by which the COP monitors progress made by Parties in meeting their commitments and in achieving the Convention's ultimate objectives. (Articles 4.1 and 12).